

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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INFO AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

LUXEMBOURG 7695

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS UNN

USMISSION OECD PARIS UNN

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 1059

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - T E X T

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, BE, EEC

SUBJECT: WASHINGTON ENRGY CONFERENCE: ORGANIZING MEETING OF
COORDINATING GROUP

REF: A. STATE 32407 AND 32425

B. STATE 32421

C. BRUSSELS 1028 NOTAL

1. SUMMARY: DAVIGNON HAS INFORMED AMBASSADOR STRAUSSZ-HUPE THAT
GOB FINDS FEB 25 TOO EARLY A DATE FOR CONVENING THE COORDINATION
GROUP. GOB COUNTER-PROPOSAL IS FOR HOLDING A LOWER LEVEL
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PRELIMINARY SESSION IN WASHINGTON ON FEB 25 AT WHICH BELGIAN

SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE WOULD BE AMBASSADOR PAUL DENIS, WITH FIRST MEETING OF COORDINATING GROUP TO BE SCHEDULED ABOUT A WEEK LATER IN ANOTHER CAPITAL. END SUMMARY.

2. DAVIGNON MET WITH ME FEBRUARY 19 TO FIVE HIS APPRAISAL OF THE WASHINGTON ENERGY CONFERENCE AND THE CONSIDERED REACTION OF THE GOB TO THE SECRETARY'S PROPOSAL FOR A MEETING OF THE COORDINATING GROUP FEBRUARY 25. HE SAID GOB IS PLEASED WITH THE OUTCOME OF THE CONFERENCE NOTWITHSTANDING THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY'S SELF-INFLICTED WOUNDS FOR WHICH NOBODY IS TO BLAME BUT THE COMMUNITY. DAVIGNON ADMIRERED THE SECRETARY'S AFFABILITY AND HIS SENSITIVITY TO POINTS OF VIEW WHICH WERE NOT ALWAYS CONCORDANT WITH HIS. THE SECRETARY'S AMENABILITY TO COMPROMISE HAD INSURED A SUCCESSFUL CONFERENCE.

3. ON THE BASIS OF SOUNDING OF EC NINE COLLEAGUES, SAID DAVIGNON, THE GOV CONSIDERS IT NEXT TO IMPOSSIBLE TO CONVENE THE COORDINATING GROUP AS EARLY AS FEB 25, ALTHOUGH A WEEK LATER MIGHT BE FEASIBLE. THE PROBLEM WITH THE FEB 25 DATE IS THAT THE COMMISSION OUGHT TO BE REPRESENTED, BUT THE EIGHT CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO SORT OUT THE QUESTION OF REPRESENTATION SO QUICKLY.

4. THE GOB WOULD PREFER CONVENING "A PRELIMINARY SESSION" AT WHICH THE COMMUNITY NEED NOT NECESSARILY BE REPRESENTED. THIS PRELIMINARY MEETING COULD TACKLE PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS SUCH AS PROCEDURES FOR A ROTATING CHAIRMANSHIP AND VENUE, AND EXPLORE SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS SUCH AS POSSIBLE APPROACHES TO STANDING ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING THE C-20, IMF, OECD, ETC.

5. THE BELGIAN REPRESENTATIVE AT A PRELIMINARY SESSION WOULD BE AMBASSADOR PAUL DENIS, RECENTLY AMBASSADOR TO ALGERIA AND NOW MFA AD HOC ENERGY ACTION COORDINATOR. DAVIGNON WOULD EXPECT TO REPRESENT THE GOB AT THE FIRST MEETING OF THE COORDINATING GROUP. AFTER WHICH THE BELGIAN "PERMANENT" REPRESENTATIVE WOULD BE OCKRENT.

6. BECAUSE HE IS SURE THE USG WISHES TO AVOID APPEARING TO DOMINATE THE COORDINATING GROUP, DAVIGNON WONDERED WHETHER THE FIRST MEETING MIGHT NOT BE HELD SOMEWHERE OTHER THAN WASHINGTON, PERHAPS IN LONDON, BONN, OR BRUSSELS.

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7. DAVIGNON THOUGHT THE FRENCH WOULD PROBABLY PROVE AGREEABLE TO SEEING THE COMMISSION REPRESENTED IN THE COORDINATING GROUP, THUS ASSURING THEMSELVES INDIRECT ACCESS TO GROUP.

8. DAVIGNON SAID THE SECRETARY'S MESSAGE TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER WENT BEYOND THE PARAMETERS OF THE BELGIAN READING OF THE WASHINGTON ENERGY CONFERENCE COMMUNIQUE, BUT HE VIEWED THE AMERICAN READING AS "GOOD DIPLOMACY".

9. FOR THE FUTURE OF THE COMMUNITY, TWO ISSUES ARE AT STAKE:
--THE NEED TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THE EC CAN CONTINUE DEALING WITH THE
US EVEN WITHOUT FRANCE:
--THE NEED TO ASSURE THAT THE WASHINGTON ENERGY CONFERENCE FOLLOW-
ON EXERCISE PRODUCES SUCCESSFUL RESULTS, ESPECIALLY IF FRANCE IS TO
BE BROUGHT AROUND AT ALL.

10. FRANCE IS BETTING ON THE FAILURE OF THE EIGHT TO PROVE
THEMSELVES COHESIVE AND NOT A COLLECTION OF SEPARATE NATIONALISTIC
INTERESTS. DAVIGNON HAS NO DOUBT FRANCE CONTINUES TO SEEK TO
TO MAINTAIN AND EVEN STRENGTHEN ITS ROLE IN THE EC. JOBERT WHO
SEEMS TO BE DRIVEN BY PERSONAL POLITICAL AMBITION IS NOW HAILED
IN FRANCE AS A "NEW JOAN OF ARC, A NEW HERO OF FRENCH NATIONALISTS."
BUT, SAID DAVIGNON, JOBERT HAS BOUGHT INTERNAL SUCCESS AT A
PROHIBITIVE EXTERNAL PRICE. IT IS NOW UP TO THE EIGHT TO PROVE
THE FRENCH ARE WRONG, THAT THE FRENCH ARE FOLLOWING AN "ABSURD
AND STUPID" POLICY.

11. ALTHOUGH NOT INSTRUCTED TO GIVE THE BELGIANS THE
SUBSTANCE OF WHAT WE ARE TELLING THE ARAB STATES ABOUT THE
WASHINGTON ENERGY CONFERENCE, I CONSIDERED IT APPROPRIATE TO GIVE
DAVIGNON MOST OF THE MAIN POINTS CONTAINED IN STATE 32425.
STRAUSZ-HUPE

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